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AMBASA NA HÉIREANN, LONDAIN



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CONFIDENTIAL

3 October, 1994.

Mr. Seán O hUiginn,
Assistant Secretary,
Anglo-Irish Division,
Department of Foreign Affairs,
St. Stephen's Green,
DUBLIN 2.

PST
YSS
Mr F Murray
Dr M Mansergh
Mr T Dalton
JLH
10/10
5/10

Dear Assistant Secretary,

The Adams/Mates TV Confrontation

On Thursday last, the day after the clash between Gerry Adams and Michael Mates on BBC2, I happened to meet Peter Snow at the Chinese National Day Reception. You will recall that Snow was the interviewer and moderator on that occasion. We were joined by Sir Patrick Mayhew and David Howell, M.P. and the discussion inevitably centred on the TV debate of the previous evening. The general feeling, shared by Snow, was that Adams, by his continuous interruptions and obstructive tactics, had done his cause no good. Mayhew was of the view that "Michael, by his more dignified attitude, did rather well in the circumstances". He assured us all that "we are not out to damage Gerry Adams: that is not our intention at all". He could have fooled me!

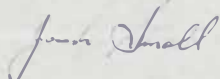
There was no opportunity for a longer discussion with Mayhew as he was rushing to Downing Street to join the Prime Minister for his meeting with John Alderdice. Before leaving he remarked that "things are going rather well, don't you think?"

Speaking privately to him afterwards, Snow said that at a certain point in the TV debate Adams had made a critical remark about the two Englishmen he was with on the programme - meaning of course, Snow and Mates. Snow said he felt tempted to point out to Adams that his mother was Irish and that he was in fact born in Dublin! I suggested to Snow that although the debate itself was a rather unedifying spectacle, the importance attaching to it lay not in what was said on the occasion but in the fact that the British Government had

arranged for an M.P. and a recent Northern Ireland Minister to appear on the same programme with Adams. Was that not another statement by the British Government about the IRA cessation of operations and the "permanence" issue? Snow agreed and said the symbolism was unmistakable from his point of view.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joseph Small". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Joseph Small
Ambassador